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THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION¹

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The present is a time of widespread confusion in theological education. Until a comparatively recent date there was general agreement among our theological schools as to the kind of course needed to prepare men for the Christian ministry. The curricula of all of them were much the same and were practically what they had been from the beginning. Every student was expected to study the Old and New Testaments in their original tongues, church history, apologetic and dogmatic theology, homiletics, and the pastoral care. Beyond these time-honoured subjects no one thought of going. But within the last few years a great change has taken place. It has come to be widely felt that the traditional course is inadequate and ill-adapted to the needs of the ministry in this modern age. On every hand we are hearing criticism of the old order of things and the demand that theological education be radically reconstructed in order to bring it into closer touch with existing conditions. No one can deny that there is justice in the criticism and that the demand for reconstruction has at least some warrant. In many of our theological institutions change has already come on a larger or smaller scale. New subjects undreamed of by the fathers have been given a place in the curriculum and are engaging a large share of attention. But the immediate result has been serious confusion. It was

¹ Address given at the Meadville Theological School (June, 1909).

difficult enough in the three years of the theological course adequately to master even the five or six subjects which formerly constituted the whole of the curriculum. To add the many new subjects that are clamoring for treatment and still do thorough and satisfactory work is out of the question. Students must either content themselves with a mere smattering of knowledge in a great variety of fields or must select a few out of the many and confine their attention to those few. The former is demoralizing, the latter alone rational. As a consequence the necessity of an elective system has been frankly recognized by many of our theological schools. But the result is the emergence of a serious question. Are all the subjects already taught or to be taught hereafter of equal importance to the prospective minister? Does it make no difference to which he devotes his attention? Is a man adequately prepared for the work of the Christian ministry who has spent three years of graduate study in a more or less theological atmosphere and in the pursuit of any subjects not altogether alien to religion and theology which he may happen to have elected? A system of election carried through consistently and thoroughly undoubtedly implies this. But few theological faculties probably are ready to assent to it. What subjects then are necessary? Which, if any, among the multiplicity of studies now claiming attention should be required of every student? Which may fairly be left to his own choice? This fundamental question has not always been seriously faced and answered on its merits. Like many of our colleges, our theological schools have as a rule drifted into the position in which they find themselves or have reached it simply by way of compromise. The traditional disciplines were provided for by fully endowed professorships. They were already in possession of the field and they seemed the only bulwark against complete educational anarchy. New subjects were gradually given a place as the demand became insistent, sometimes as required studies, oftener in somewhat contemptuous fashion as electives, and the amount of time devoted to the older courses was curtailed only so far as necessary to give standing-room to the newer ones.

This, of course, is not a permanently tolerable situation. The

whole matter must be dealt with in a more radical and thorough-going fashion. The question must be asked by all our theological institutions: What does the Christian minister actually need to fit him for his work in the present age? The importance of the question was never greater than it is today. There have been periods when all was settled and students needed only to receive the Christian system ready made from the hands of their instructors and pass it on unchanged to their people. The appropriation of a definite and circumscribed system, well understood and generally agreed upon, at least within the communion to which the school belonged, was all that was required. Today the situation is wholly changed. The old way of looking at things is out of date and the old landmarks have largely disappeared. This we are feeling both in our liberal and in our conservative churches. Theology is in the making and ethical and religious ideals and aspirations are in flux. The need of the age is not more men in the ministry, as so many are saying, but more strong and thoroughly trained men. There is need, as perhaps never before, of wise and intelligent leaders who shall be able rightly to guide the church and the world in this time of religious confusion and upheaval. In quiet seasons, when all is going on as in the past, when traditional principles and customs are everywhere in control, men of meager gifts and narrow training may be equal to the task of uttering the familiar message to a docile people. But now only strong men can meet the situation. Men of insight, of discrimination, of independence, of initiative, men who can think clearly and to good purpose and can act wisely and efficiently—such men we must have. How to train them is the problem facing our theological institutions today. No school can make little men into great men, but men adequately endowed—and no others ought to go into the ministry in this age—can be given an equipment which will enable them to minister wisely and helpfully to this restless and changing age, an equipment without which they are likely to be blind leaders of the blind and to impede instead of promote the progress of God's kingdom in this earth.

What kind of a training then should the theological student have to fit him for efficient service in the Christian ministry of

today? What are the ends at which he needs particularly to aim and the lines along which he needs particularly to work? Difficult or even impossible as it may be to reach a satisfactory answer to this question in the present condition of things, or to give the answer, if it were reached, practical effect in theological education, at least the question is worth raising. I am concerned here only with training for the work of the active ministry. Undoubtedly our theological schools should also train theological specialists and should offer opportunities to social and religious workers of various kinds. But the great majority of our students are preparing for the specific work of the Christian ministry, and it is only of them that I shall undertake to speak.

I. First of all I should say it is essential that the Christian minister in this age, as in every other, should understand Christianity, should know what it is he represents, and what he has to offer the world and this age in which he lives. This seems axiomatic and yet strangely enough some modern writers on theological education disregard it altogether. They insist that the one all-important thing for the theological student to know is the world of today, what it is and what it needs, in order to be able to minister wisely to it. Those who take this position seem to assume that the business of the Christian minister is simply to help the world in any way he can quite without regard to Christianity and to what it may have to offer, or that it is so easy to understand Christianity that no special study of it is required. The former assumption is based upon a misconception of the ministerial calling, the latter upon a misunderstanding of the nature of Christianity.

The Christian minister is not a mere philanthropist or social reformer, he is the representative and herald of the Christian religion. It is his business not merely to help the world as any earnest man of any other faith or of no faith might undertake to help it, but to bring to bear upon the world the uplifting power of Christianity. He is a Christian minister just because he believes that in Christianity there is power for the betterment of humanity and of the world, and there rests upon him the responsibility of making that power tell in the largest possible degree. I do not mean to say that a Christian minister should make use of none

but Christian agencies, and should withhold his active support from movements for good carried on under other than Christian auspices. On the contrary, he should promote every good cause he can by every possible means and should co-operate with all the forces of goodness everywhere, whatever their name or sign. But it is his specific duty to marshal all the Christian forces over which he has control and to enlist all the Christian spirit at his command for the accomplishment of God's work in the world. And if he is to do this wisely and efficiently it is necessary that he understand Christianity thoroughly. No mere casual acquaintance with it, no mere general notion that it means kindness and mercy and love, will answer the purpose. There must be an intimate familiarity with it in its inner nature and in its various manifestations if he is to make it a real power and bring it to bear in helpful fashion upon the diverse needs of the community and of the age. There are those, as we all know, who believe that Christianity has no message for the world of today, who think it an outworn system and look elsewhere for their ideals and their inspirations. If this were to become the plight of any Christian minister undoubtedly he ought to substitute for Christian means and Christian agencies others that seemed to him more effective in promoting the common end. For no man should make use of less effective means simply because they are Christian. The one great end is to get the work done, to get builded in this our earth the kingdom of God by whatever means we can. But the only reason men do not believe in the power of Christianity to meet the needs of today as well as of other days is because they do not understand it. If it seem to anybody inappropriate and ineffective in the modern situation it is because it has not been fully comprehended. No one is justified in doubting it or turning from it until he knows it through and through, and certainly of all men the Christian minister is recreant to his task who either distrusts its efficiency or fails to make it as efficient as it might be made because he has not fully mastered its meaning and grasped its innermost significance. And to do this is no easy matter, as the critics referred to above seem to suppose. To understand the genius of any great movement, to see what it means and what it demands, to determine its adaptations, to

measure its limitations, and to uncover the sources of its power is one of the most difficult of tasks, and Christianity is no exception to the rule. The easy-going acceptance of it and the easy going rejection of it are alike mischievous. Either way it is discredited and shorn of its power. The fundamental thing for every Christian minister is thoroughly to understand it that he may bring Christianity itself and not some poor counterfeit of it to bear on the world in which he lives, and that he may draw on its deep wells of power and not upon the broken cisterns of some self-created delusion.

Whatever else then a theological seminary does it must give its students an understanding of Christianity. But how is this to be done? Here there may be many opinions. The main thing is to secure agreement concerning the end to be aimed at. If there be agreement here we shall have at least one clear principle to guide us in the shaping of our theological curricula and the differences in detail will matter relatively little. But let us look at some of the details. Assuming the fundamental aim just stated how may it be reached?

I suppose everyone will admit that an essential to the understanding of Christianity is an understanding of Jesus Christ, of his purposes, of his intentions, of what it was he wished and undertook to do. Some would say this is the whole of Christianity. I do not myself take so narrow a view, but that it is an important part of it I am quite sure. I am not talking here of what is commonly called christology, the origin and nature of Jesus Christ, the constitution of his person, his relation to God. All this is of secondary importance. The essential question is, What it was he undertook to do and what he actually did. This at least one must know if one would understand Christianity.

And yet it is an extraordinary fact that in most of our theological institutions relatively little emphasis is laid in the curriculum upon the study of Jesus. There are courses upon the gospels and also, in some cases, a single course upon the life and teaching of Christ, but as a rule he is subordinated to instruction in the New Testament as such, and so far as most of the curricula go, he might be the least important of all the subjects that demand the students'

attention. This is a lamentable situation. There is no one thing the theological student ought to know more thoroughly than the work and purposes of Jesus. He cannot be treated adequately by the New Testament department alone, nor should he be. He should be made the center, or at any rate be given a place in the work of every department. There should be courses in the ethics of Jesus, his conception of religion, his idea of God, his place in the history of the church or of the world, his use of the Old Testament, his attitude and methods as a teacher, as a preacher, and so on—courses conducted by the departments severally concerned. The New Testament department should see to it that his life and work and teaching as a whole are set forth and the sources for a knowledge of them carefully investigated; but in all the departments the students' thought should be continually brought back to Christ. It should be the aim of instruction, so far as possible, to bring him before the men as he appeared to those who saw him in the flesh and to let him make his own appeal to them. If he be divine, he ought to convince them of his divinity; if he be supreme, he ought to convince them of his supremacy as he did his early disciples. Theological students, of all men, ought not to accept his supremacy on the basis of theological tradition or philosophical speculation. To give them an enthusiasm for Jesus, born of their own vision of him as he really was, this alone can make them at once true and effective ministers of his.

But if Jesus is to be understood he must be studied in the light of his environment, not as a supernatural figure, a second Melchizedek without father or mother, but as a member of the Jewish race and an heir of the great prophets. In other words, the history of Israel, of its aspirations, its ideals, and its ideas, all that inner life of a people which alone explains its great men—this too the student must know who would adequately understand Jesus himself. How far such study should be carried and how much it should involve I cannot attempt to say. It belongs primarily to the biblical department to answer the question. What is demanded at this point is not that a man shall know the Old Testament, but that he shall understand Jesus Christ, and so much of the Old Testament and so much of that which follows it

as may be necessary for this, it should be insisted that every theological student ought to have. Whether this shall involve the study of Hebrew is also not a question for me to answer. I can conceive that such study might immensely forward the end, but I can conceive also that it might hinder it, if it distracted attention from the one important matter. On the old theory that the Bible was the literal word of God, of course the study of it in its original tongues was an absolute necessity for every self-respecting preacher of the word. But now that that theory has passed away, the study of Hebrew and Greek for the Christian minister must justify itself primarily by showing that it gives him a better understanding of Jesus Christ. This, at least, the study of Hebrew properly conducted may doubtless be made to do by imparting a larger knowledge of the forces that made and molded Jesus and a more intimate acquaintance with the atmosphere in which he lived and moved.

And still further, Jesus can be adequately understood only as he is studied in connection with his early followers. The impression which he made upon them is an essential part of our picture of him. It is not simply his words and deeds that bring him before our eyes, but the fascination which he exerted over them and the power with which his personality dominated them. And then, too, the sources upon which we must rely for a knowledge of his life and work come from them. Only when we understand them and make ourselves familiar with their ideals and ideas can we succeed in any degree in detaching him from the circle of his disciples and discover, better in many cases than they were able to do, his real purposes and his inner spirit. The New Testament then should be an object of study, not primarily in order to know it—that is not the point here—but in order the better to understand Jesus Christ. If this were recognized to be the primary end controlling New Testament study, its methods would evidently be different from those that have prevailed in the past. Just what might be involved I do not attempt to say. The determination of it belongs to the New Testament department. But whatever may be involved of New Testament philology, exegesis, history, theology, the Christian minister ought if possible to have.

But Jesus is not the whole of Christianity. It is a complex phenomenon and it has had a long history. No one can fully comprehend it as it now exists, unless he knows how it came to be what it is. No one indeed can fully know what it now is except as he has followed its history and is able to trace in it threads now in some cases almost wholly hidden from sight. The man who would make Christianity count for good in this age must know it in its various phases, past and present, know what it is and what it is not, what it can do and what it cannot do, the latter as important as the former. Nothing is easier for some people than to take Christianity in whatever form it is offered them without question and without discrimination. Nothing is easier for others than to reject the whole Christian system as untrue and ineffective. And nothing is easier perhaps for all of us than to accept an element of it here and there which happens to appeal to us. But in none of these ways can the Christian minister do his duty by the world, for in none of these ways can Christianity be brought effectively to bear upon the needs of the age. To disentangle the elements of which it is composed, to trace them to their origin and study them in their combination, to see how they have been affected by each other and modified by outside influences—all this is necessary if one is to make intelligent and discriminating use of the existing product. To know Christianity means not only to know it as a totality but to distinguish what is controlling and dominant in it from what is only subordinate and secondary. All the parts of a complex system may be made equal objects of faith but they cannot possibly be made equal instruments of power. Only when the dominant principles of Christianity are discovered and actually made controlling can it do the work it is fitted to do.

By the historical study of Christianity, by the study of it in its origin, in its development, and in its existing forms, the permanent and the temporary, the valuable and the worthless may be discriminated one from the other and the vital and controlling principles which give it its essential character and make it what it really is laid bare. It is not so much the history of Christian institutions or of the vicissitudes of the Christian Church that

is important but the history of the Christian idea and of the Christian spirit. What has Christianity been thought and felt to be? What has it actually proved itself to be to men of one and another type in one and another age, from the apostles' day to our own? This is how its significance and inner nature reveal themselves to the eye of the historian. Perhaps one may find by such study that Christianity has been in the main only a development of the principles of Jesus Christ and that it justly calls itself by his name because it has been true to his purposes. Or perhaps one may find that it has been almost from the beginning, even from the apostle Paul, or from the primitive disciples who knew Christ in the flesh, a complete perversion of his spirit, that it has made important what did not interest him and subordinated or forgotten all that he held dear. In either case, if we would understand Christianity we must know both Jesus Christ and the Christian centuries since his day. We may apply to the Christianity of the present age, to that of our own church, or of any other church, any test we please. We may measure it by its agreement with the spirit and purposes of Jesus or by its adaptation to the needs of the men of today. In either case we can estimate it justly only as we know it in its origin and history. We must know it thus if it be only to reject it. We must know it thus if we would reform it and make it conform more nearly to our ideal of it. Much more must we know it thus if we would wisely and effectively employ it as an instrument for the promotion of God's work in the world.

Another discipline rich in fruitfulness for the understanding of Christianity is the history of religion, or the comparative study of the principal religions of the world. It has but recently found its way into our theological institutions and by some its rightful place there is disputed on the ground that it is, strictly speaking, a university not a theological discipline. But this is to misunderstand the principal end of theological study, which is not to gain an acquaintance with various theological disciplines but to reach an adequate understanding of the nature and meaning of Christianity. For this a study of the religions of the world is of the utmost importance. Only when one has placed Christianity beside other great systems is one in a position fully to appreciate

either its significance or its worth. A common error of an earlier day was to deny all likeness between Christianity and other faiths. Christianity was alone true and all others but tissues of falsehood. A common error today is to magnify the oneness and overlook the differences, to put Christianity on a level with the ethnic faiths and lose sight altogether of its distinctive elements. The former attitude meant a misunderstanding of the ethnic faiths, the latter a misunderstanding of Christianity. Christianity has much that is common with other faiths and much that is peculiar to itself. Only as this is recognized and the two elements clearly distinguished can its message to the modern world be fully understood.

The study of Jesus Christ, of Christian history, and of the other great religions of the world, should bring the student to a clear knowledge of what Christianity really is and what it is fitted to do. To summarize what has thus been learned and to set forth the meaning and significance of Christianity in clear form is the province of dogmatic theology. To one who has studied Christianity in the way that has been indicated, dogmatics should be no more than a formulation of results already attained and conclusions already reached. Rightly understood it is simply a comprehensive and consistent statement of the principles of Christianity. Those principles are wholly practical, having to do with religion and ethics, with man's attitude toward God and toward his fellows, not with metaphysics or with science. The notion that it belongs to dogmatic theology to set forth a Christian philosophy of the universe is in my opinion entirely erroneous. This, so far as it is important at all, belongs to apologetics, not dogmatics. It may be necessary to do it in order to show the rationality of Christianity and to commend it to thinking men, but it is not necessary in order to make it understood. Experience shows that Christianity is consistent with the most various and contradictory philosophies, and this is natural for it is itself not a philosophy but a religion and an ethic. It is in other words wholly practical, and to formulate and summarize its practical principles, religious and ethical, is the one and only province of dogmatic theology.

II. The primary and indispensable equipment of every Chris-

tian minister is, as I have said, an understanding of Christianity. Without it he has no adequate message for the world. With it he is ready for all emergencies and can meet all needs. But it is necessary that he shall know the needs to be met, and so a second part of the necessary equipment of a Christian minister is an understanding of men and their needs, particularly the men and the needs of the present age. Two opposite and extreme positions have been taken in this matter. Some maintain that a knowledge of men and their needs is the one thing necessary to the Christian minister and that this should constitute the chief or only subject of study in theological schools. But as already said, to know the needs of men is vain unless one has something with which to meet those needs. Others on the contrary maintain that the only way to know men is to live among them, that the minister learns all he needs to know about them in his active career in the ministry and that the divinity school can give him nothing of value and need not concern itself with the matter. In reply to this it may be said that the very power of seeing depends in considerable degree upon knowing what to look for and how to look for it and for this the training of the schools is needed. It is a notorious fact that many ministers go on year after year endeavoring to meet the needs which their fathers met, quite oblivious to the existence of any new needs peculiar to the present age or of any old needs outside the traditional circle. One of the most important services rendered by modern social science is that it opens men's eyes to conditions to which hitherto they have been for the most part quite blind, though the conditions themselves are in many cases centuries old. If one were to gain nothing from it except an open vision and an inquiring mind its study would be amply justified.

An important preparation for an adequate understanding of the men whose needs we are to meet is a study of psychology, including the psychology of religion, but by no means that alone. The study has not been made enough of in its relation to ministerial efficiency. Metaphysics and ontology have often engrossed the attention of theologians to the exclusion of the far more important branch of psychology.

It is in this connection too that the study of religion in its various manifestations, individual and racial, of our own and other ages again has value. To understand the religious nature of man on a large scale and over a broad area is an indispensable condition of understanding the religious needs of the individual or of the community to which we may be called upon to minister.

Still further, no one is in a position to understand the needs of the particular community in which his lot may be cast and of the particular people with whom he may be thrown unless he knows something of the tendencies of the age in which he lives, and of the forces and influences which have made it what it is. In other words, the study of history, not primarily for the sake of knowing the past, but for the sake of comprehending the present, is indispensable to anyone who would minister wisely to the needs of the world. What shall one think of existing institutions who does not know how they came to be? How shall one decide what attitude to take toward the various social movements of the day, all forcing themselves on our attention and all claiming to be for the benefit of humanity, unless one has followed the world-wide awakening of the social conscience, and has traced its many manifestations, and knows their mutual relations and their bearing upon the common cause? And how shall one judge the ethical ideals of today who fails to understand their genesis and growth? An immense amount of good energy is continually wasted by the best people in endeavoring to change conditions which, if they understood their history, they would see are changing themselves quite without their help, or it may be are unchangeable by any power of man. And meanwhile the age is crying for the help of just such people who have no help left to give where it would really count. Certainly no one needs wisdom in this matter more than the Christian minister, whose very profession marks him as a leader in all moral as well as religious effort. No one can estimate what tremendous progress might be made in building the kingdom of God in this our land if all the moral power that resides in our Christian churches were enlisted for the promotion of wise and practicable and permanently worthwhile ends. No mere daily contact with the world of men, illuminating as it is, can impart that

largeness of view and that breadth of vision which are needed by him who would best serve his day and generation.

And what is true in ethical and social lines is true in every line. Who can understand the existing religious situation—the curious enthusiasms, the astonishing aspirations, and the often disheartening indifference—unless he knows where it has all come from and how? It is not merely that an understanding of modern religious history in its inner development and its controlling forces spares the Christian minister much misplaced confidence and much needless despair, but that it enables him to put effort where effort is needed and where it really counts, and makes it possible for him to appeal effectively to the often latent, always powerful religious impulses of humanity.

Equally important is a knowledge of the history of modern thought that one may understand its currents, may know what they mean for the religious and the moral life, and how they may be utilized for the improvement of both. Many ministers of our liberal as well as of our conservative churches seem to have no conception of the significance of modern trends of thought. They may purposely ignore them as ungodly, as many conservatives do, they may live in them and revel in them, as many liberals do, without understanding whence they came and whither they go, and so without being able to minister effectively and helpfully to an intellectual world dominated by them. It is not enough to know what men are thinking about today. That is easy to find out, at any rate for one's own community. But if one would bring a message to thinking men that has worth and power he must know why they are thinking as they are and what their thinking means for present and for future.

Where shall a man get the knowledge that is necessary along all these lines? If it is the business of the theological school to give him an understanding of Christianity, it would seem to be the business of the college or university to give him an understanding of the world in which he lives. And indeed it would be a great help if students for the ministry were to carry on lines of study with this end in view before coming to the seminary. It would be much better worth while than courses in more specifically

theological subjects which many now take in college by way of preparation for their professional work. But after all, under existing circumstances, a large measure of responsibility rests upon the divinity school itself for instruction along these lines. Course must be offered which are either not given in college or have not been taken there, and no man should be sent out into the ministry who has not at least had his attention called to the immense importance of understanding the age in which he lives and the men among whom he moves and who has not done some work with that end in view.

But in addition to an understanding of the general tendencies of the age—social, ethical, religious, and intellectual—every theological student needs some knowledge of the specific conditions which he will be called upon to face in his ministerial work. Here much may, indeed must, be left to the period of active ministerial service. But even here too some helpful training is possible and much more would be possible if there were a larger degree of specialization in the Christian ministry. Many of the crying problems of the age are peculiar to certain strata of society or to particular kinds of communities. There is the problem of poverty and the problem of wealth, the problem of the city and of the country, the problem of the factory town and of the rural village, the problem of the intellectual classes and of the uneducated masses. One of the unfortunate things about the ministerial profession is that we treat it so commonly as a single homogeneous calling and try to train men for the ministry in general, when we should be training them for particular lines of ministerial service. In modern education for foreign missionary work a great advance has been made in this respect. Students know to which field they are going and are able to prepare themselves to meet the peculiar needs of that particular field. But with the men who remain at home everything is still left largely to chance. All receive practically the same training and take up ministerial work in the country, in the small town, in the large city, in the slums, or on the avenue according as the opening happens to come. It would make immensely for efficiency if the peculiar tastes and abilities of individuals were studied and they were advised to prepare

themselves for some particular kind of ministerial service in some particular sort of environment. Men are already preparing in our theological institutions for service in various positions, such as bible-school teachers, Y.M.C.A. secretaries, and settlement directors. It would be an immense advance if men were to prepare themselves particularly for one or another definite kind of ministerial work, to be preachers or pastors or organizers, or to labor specifically in the country, in the factory community, in the slums of a great city, or in university circles. No man can acquaint himself with all these various fields, their conditions and their needs, and the best methods to be employed in ministering to them. Here if anywhere election and specialization are appropriate and necessary. And even if it should chance that circumstances led a man into some field for which he had not particularly prepared, he would be better fitted for the unfamiliar work for having made a thorough study of some special line of service, even though not his own. Much of our so-called practical training lacks point and fails to grip just because it is training for everything in general and nothing in particular.

III. The third matter in which training is needed by the theological student is how to apply Christianity to the needs of men. Every Christian minister should know how to bring Christianity effectively to bear upon the world. This can be fully discovered only by experience in the field. Men learn how best to do the work by doing it. At the same time, in this line as in the preceding, the theological school can do much. It should not content itself with teaching what Christianity is and what the world is upon which it is to be brought to bear; it should also give instruction in the matter of method, in what is commonly termed practical theology. The study of the age in which we live is, strictly speaking, no more a part of practical theology than the study of Christianity itself. Both are, of course, practical, inasmuch as they constitute part of a man's training for practical ministerial work, but their immediate purpose is different from that of the discipline known more specifically as practical theology. That discipline has to do properly with the application of a Christianity presumed to be already known to an age presumed to be already understood.

Viewed thus practical theology should have not necessarily a large but an essential place in the theological curriculum. The old notion of its scope is much too narrow for the needs of today. It should be viewed in a broader way and handled on a larger scale than commonly in the past and it should include many things which formerly were either not studied at all or were studied in other connections and with another purpose. I can do no more here than enumerate a few of the subjects which legitimately belong within its sphere.

In addition to the familiar topics of homiletics and the pastoral care, there properly belongs to practical theology the whole matter of apologetics which means the presentation of Christianity in such a way as to show its essential rationality, and its fitness to satisfy the needs of men, and also to meet the peculiar objections which have sprung from modern thought and life.

The whole subject of religious education, which is now coming so prominently to the front, also belongs here. We are realizing its importance as never before and are learning that the old haphazard and slipshod methods of training the young are not only ineffective but positively demoralizing.

To practical theology pertains also the study of the great religious classics of the world, not for scientific ends, and not, in this case, for the sake of understanding Christianity and other religions, but for the purpose of comprehending better the spiritual forces which have moved and moulded the lives of multitudes of men in past and present and of enriching one's own stores of religious power. For this purpose, of course, the Bible still remains the most important of all on account both of its inherent character as a great monument of religious experience and of the estimate in which it is held by Christendom. Whatever attitude one may take toward the question of biblical authority the Christian minister who does not steep himself in the Bible robs himself of a tremendous engine of spiritual power, whether his work be cast with the most conservative or most radical of Christian communities. And for this it is not the New Testament that is alone important, but the massive and magnificent revelations of religious experience of various types which crowd the pages of the Old

Testament, the most immediately and broadly and variously human of all the great religious classics of the world.

An enlargement of the scope of practical theology is also necessary because the Christian minister of today is called upon to do so many things of which his predecessors of an earlier day never dreamed. Undoubtedly the multiplication of functions has led to an unfortunate scattering of energy and has meant in many cases a decided loss of efficiency. The situation, indeed, as it now widely exists is not permanently tolerable. Specialization in ministerial work will soon come to be a necessity of existence. And as specialization in function becomes common, of course specialization in seminary preparation will be more and more needful. But of this I have already spoken. I may simply say that as every theological student should undertake to acquaint himself as fully as possible with the peculiar needs of some particular type of community or class of society, he should also prepare himself to become an expert in some special line of ministerial service. Expert in all he cannot possibly be. To be expert in none is to be equally inefficient in all. Every Christian minister may and must know Christianity. He cannot possibly know and minister to the whole world: let him make his choice of field and line of work and let him be a master therein.

I have spoken of three things as essential to the Christian minister—a knowledge of Christianity, a knowledge of men, and a knowledge of the method of bringing Christianity effectively to bear upon them. For training in all these lines our theological schools should provide in such measure as they can, and in all these lines the demands and the opportunities are today greater than they ever were. It is not that the number of courses offered needs necessarily to be greatly multiplied; that may in many cases be impracticable. But if so, some of the old must be displaced by some of the new subjects, so far as that can be done without in any way lessening the emphasis on the fundamental matter of understanding Christianity. At any rate, it is not a time for lowering our standards or shortening our course, as some seem to think in their short-sighted desire to increase the ranks of the ministry. On the contrary, it is a time to require more than

ever before. Under the old system students had perhaps time enough, but now a three-years' course is all too short.

But even if the course were lengthened to four years, as in my opinion it might well be, no one man could do everything, nor should he even if he could. Election on a larger or smaller scale there must be. And moreover, quite independently of the necessities of the case, the elective system has in itself great value in our theological schools, as in other schools. But no elective system is justified which allows a man to enter upon the work of the ministry without a thorough understanding of Christianity and an adequate comprehension of the age in which he lives. This much at least he must have. The elective system has its dangers in permitting men to devote their attention to the unimportant at the expense of the essential matters. But if our theological institutions were to plan all their courses under the dominance of a clear and definite ideal, and were to keep that ideal always before their students, there would be little cause to complain of scattered energies and wasted time.

Throughout this address I have spoken of theological education in a specific and somewhat narrow sense. I have said nothing of that larger training of mind and heart which every Christian minister should have. He who would meet the spiritual needs of men and would lead them in paths of peace or in ways of service, must have a training such as no professional course can give. He must speak out of a burning heart, out of a rich experience, and out of a well-furnished mind. It has been said that successful ministers are born, not made. But the successful minister is always in the making. By intimate human contacts, by communion with the best and greatest souls of all the ages, by vigorous thought and strenuous toil, by all these ways that make true men and true leaders of men the true Christian minister too is trained. The ministry is not merely a profession: it is limitless opportunity for service; and there are no abilities natural or acquired, no endowments, spiritual and intellectual, no gifts of mind and heart, no graces of character, no capacities for devotion, no power of enthusiasm that may not find within it freest scope and largest exercise.